

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 MOGADI 01402 161004Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----050070 161011Z /21

P R 160845Z AUG 77
FM AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5183
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

S E C R E T MOGADISCIO 1402

EXDIS

NO FOREIGN DISSEMINATION

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS, SO, US
SUBJ: SIAD PERCEPTION OF US MILITARY HELP

1. I AM NOT SURE HOW REALISTICALLY SIAD PERCEIVES US POSITION
ON SOMALI ARMS REQUESTS.

2. THERE IS EVIDENTLY A MISUNDERSTANDING BETWEEN EGYPTIAN
MINISTRY OF DEFENSE AND EGYPTIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY REGARDING
ARMS SUPPORT FOR SIAD WHICH HAS A BEARING ON THIS. UPON HIS
RETURN FROM CAIRO AUGUST 7, EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR EVIDENTLY
FELT SUFFICIENTLY ENCOURAGED BY HIS TALKS WITH FAHMY AND
SADAT TO BELIEVE THAT BOTH EGYPT AND US WOULD MEET SIAD
ARMS REQUESTS. WHEN I TALKED TO EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR ON
AUGUST 9 (MOGADISCIO 1370) HE HINTED BROADLY THAT US ARMS
ASSISTANCE MIGHT BE PROVIDED SOMALIA VIA THIRD COUNTRY. AT
ONE POINT, HE EVEN SUGGESTED THAT FAHMY HAD TOLD HIM US
ARMS MIGHT EVEN HAVE ARRIVED IN SOMALIA PRIOR TO HIS
RETURN CAIRO ON AUGUST 7. I DENIED OF COURSE THAT
US ARMS SUPPLIES WERE IN THE PIPELINE.

3. I WOULD SUPPOSE THAT EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR HAS SAID
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SAME THING TO PRESIDENT SIAD ON AUGUST 7. THIS IS ONLY
ASSUMPTION ON MY PART BUT IF EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR WAS
SO CONFIDENT WITH ME FOLLOWING HIS MEETING WITH SIAD, I
CAN ONLY ASSUME THIS REFLECTS SAME LINE HE TOOK WITH
SIAD.

4. I HAVE SINCE LEARNED THAT UPON AMBASSADOR'S RETURN

FROM CAIRO, EGYPTIAN MILITARY ATTACHE TOLD HIM THAT TELEGRAPHIC INSTRUCTIONS HAD BEEN RECEIVED FROM MINISTRY OF WAR IN CAIRO TURNING DOWN ADDITIONAL SOMALI WEAPONS REQUEST. EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR WAS ABSOLUTELY CONVINCED THAT ERROR HAD BEEN MADE AND THAT SADAT HAD MADE DECISION TO ASSIST WITH ADDITIONAL ARMS. HE ASKED MILITARY ATTACHE TO SEEK CLARIFICATION. COLONEL HALIM SENT FOLLOW-UP CABLE TO CAIRO AND WAS TOLD WITHIN FEW DAYS THAT EGYPT WOULD NOT RPT NOT MEET ADDITIONAL SOMALI REQUEST FOR ARMS. THIS WAS AFTER AMBASSADOR'S TALKS WITH SIAD.

5. IF EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR HAS IN FACT HINTED TO SIAD THAT EGYPTIAN AND US-PROVIDED-ARMS MIGHT BE COMING TO SOMALIA -- AND I SUSPECT HE HAS -- THEN HE HAS PUT HIMSELF IN A VERY DIFFICULT POSITION.

6. IN SIMILAR WAY, PRESENCE OF IRANIAN MILITARY DELEGATION AND IMMINENCE OF ARRIVAL OF IRANIAN ARMS SHIPMENT HAS NO DOUBT LED OTHERS -- INCLUDING VISITING US JOURNALISTS -- TO CONCLUDE THAT US WAS BEHIND IRANIAN WEAPONS HELP. SOMALIS ARE OF COURSE MORE DEVIOUS IN THEIR LOGIC THAN PROFESSIONAL NEWSMAN AND WHAT APPEALS TO THE LATTER AS A POSSIBILITY WOULD STRIKE SIAD AND OTHERS AS AN OBVIOUS FACT.

7. IN THE MEANTIME, AMBASSADOR ADDOU AND TWO-MAN SOMALI MILITARY DELEGATION HAVE NOT YET RETURNED TO MOGADISCIO.
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IN SUCH AN ATMOSPHERE, I WONDER HOW CLEARLY PRESIDENT SIAD HAS PERCEIVED THE MESSAGE THAT US IS SITTING THIS DANCE OUT SO LONG AS OGADEN INSURGENCY CONTINUES. MY POINT THEN IS MERELY TO OBSERVE POSSIBILITY THAT SIAD MAY BE ACTING FROM A GREATER FAITH IN US WILLINGNESS TO HELP THAN WASHINGTON BELIEVES. I DO NOT THINK THERE IS ANYTHING WE CAN OR SHOULD DO AT THIS TIME TO CLARIFY OUR POSITION. THAT WAS MASTERFULLY DONE DURING SOMALI DELEGATION TALKS WITH MOOSE AND SEELYE IN WASHINGTON.

BUT I THINK ITS MESSAGE HAS YET TO ARRIVE HERE.
LOUGHRAN

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NNN

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